

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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## THE QUESTION OF CAIN.

BY MRS. CASHEL HOEY.

### CHAPTER XIV. IRREVOCABLE.

THE recognition was mutual; and the confusion of Helen, caused solely by Frank Lisle's representation of the urgent necessity of secrecy, was as great as the surprise of Delphine. The French girl was equal to the occasion, and whispering: "Mademoiselle need not agitate herself, it is only I who know her," she joined her mother on the landing, and left Helen to recover herself. This was not easy; the events of the day had overtaxed her nerves, and the vague dread with which Delphine inspired her, gave her the first consciousness of the momentous nature of the step she had taken. She sank into a chair and put her hands before her eyes; the face she knew alarmed her more than any strange face could have done. She sat still while her bag was brought in, and Delphine and her mother bustled about the little apartment, and hardly ventured to look around her at the place which was now her home.

What was she to say when Madame Moreau had gone away, and she was left with Delphine?

This occurred presently. There was no want of respect in Delphine's manner as she advanced to Helen, and offered to remove her bonnet and cloak; but there was an evident expectation that she would explain. She said nothing, but Helen saw the question in her keen black eyes.

"I did not know," Helen began timidly, "that I should find you here. I did not know where you lived. I hope you will not say to anyone that you had seen me before."

"Mademoiselle may reckon on my dis-

cretion," said Delphine, with a curious kind of smile; "I did not, in the first moment of surprise, let my mother know; I shall certainly not betray mademoiselle to others."

"I am not mademoiselle," said Helen, and the falsehood brought a crimson blush to her cheek; "I am Madame Lisle, and my husband is in England; he will be here in a week."

"Truly! I am astonished. Then madame was married all the time, and no one knew it—it must have been so. I have heard the English ladies are very romantic, and may marry of their own choice. And madame has come to her own home—and the English gentleman and lady, where are they?"

"They have gone back to England. I have nothing more to do with them."

Helen had removed her gloves, and the new circlet of gold shone on her finger. The symbol was not convincing to Delphine, but she understood why her mistress took care that she should see it.

Delphine was puzzled; she did not doubt for a moment that the husband in England was the gentleman with the dark eyes, and the manners worthy of a Frenchman, who had made enquiry at her uncle's lodge, in the odd way that had caught her quick attention, and whom she had seen with Helen at the entrance to the Grand Court of the Louvre. Was it his wife for whom he had asked as "Mademoiselle," on the first occasion? Or had the marriage taken place since then, or was there any marriage at all in the case? Delphine was stirred by ardent curiosity on this point, but she could afford to wait; she must know in time. And, meanwhile, she found herself in the very element she revelled in, that of in-

trigue, and with the pleasure of deceiving her mother offered to her to begin with.

The apartment was one of those marvels of economy of space which are more ingenious than pleasant on a long acquaintance; but the very small rooms were prettily furnished. When Helen had recovered from her first surprise and alarm, which she did with celerity: natural, when her own age, and that of Delphine, are considered: she examined her abode, the first place she had ever called her own in all her life, with a good deal of interest. What a nice little refuge in which to remain hidden, and as happy as she could persuade herself to feel, until Frank should come!

A vestibule, a *salle à manger*, a *salon*, a bedroom, a dressing-room, a kitchen, all communicating, and all on the smallest scale compatible with being inhabited by grown-up people at all, formed Helen's little domain. In the dressing-room a bed had been put up for her maid, who told Helen that monsieur, the husband of madame, had arranged that all "provision was to be made" by her mother, and that she would find herself very well. Helen did not doubt this—did not, indeed, think about it; she was examining the furniture, and the blue velvet hangings of the little *salon*, and noticing the signs of a careful anticipation of her wants and wishes which the rooms presented. Books, a curiously small piano, a low *jardinière* with some ferns and flowers in it, and a blue-and-silver box of bon-bons, were among the objects that met with her especial approbation. Delphine observed her with close but covert attention, and some good-natured sympathy. Whether she was or was not the wife of the dark-eyed gentleman, she was a lucky young person, according to Delphine's simple code of morals and belief; one might be so well in madame's place.

The blue-and-silver box of bonbons was placed on the velvet-covered shelf of the mantelpiece in the *salon*; a little silver key was in the lock, and Helen did not make long delay in resorting to it. The raised lid displayed a noble provision of *marrons glacés*, and a letter, addressed to "Madame Lisle." Again blushing deeply, this time at the written falsehood, Helen broke the seal, and found a little packet enclosed in the following note, which she eagerly read:

"I hope you will like your rest, dearest, and be quite comfortable and not too

lonely until I come. Madame Moreau has promised all sorts of care and attention to my darling girl, and you must let her get you everything you want or fancy. Of course all your belongings, except what you will have taken the precaution to put into your bag, will have gone on with the other luggage to London, and you will want a lot of things. But you had better let Madame Moreau, or her daughter, order them for you (I did not see the girl, but hope she will suit you), as you ought not to be seen about Paris, even in a carriage. You will find a pocket-book, containing a slice out of our worldly wealth, in the drawer of the writing-table. The enclosed is the key. Don't be economical—it is only a small slice—and forgive me for being so practical. One of us must be practical, you know, and I do not think my queen lily is to be that one. Try to amuse yourself, and do not be dull, until I come. It is only a week's waiting, sweet one, and we shall meet, never to part again. I will write to you, of course; but, although I have never yet had a line from your dear hand, I will not ask you to write to me. I shall be moving about constantly, and hardly at all at my rooms in London. I say this now, lest in the hurry of our parting this evening I should not remember to explain it to you."

The letter ended with fervent and very prettily-worded protestations of love as unchanging as it was unequalled, and before she had read it to the end, the pain and confusion caused by the first part of it were dispersed, and Helen was able to enjoy it almost as much as a girl ought to enjoy her first love-letter in the ordinary security of a girl's life.

She had not thought about her dependence on Frank for money. The small sum in her purse, which was all that she possessed, would have sufficed for her wants for only a short time, on a very humble scale; but her notions about that had been very vague and transitory. It was quite true she was not practical. But how wonderfully kind and considerate Frank was, and how earnestly she would try to deserve his love, to make him happy, and to become "practical." She would not spend his money until she was his wife; not even though she vexed him by refraining from doing so. She would be married in her black gown. What could it matter, when there would be no one to see? And, indeed, if the only persons who knew her were to continue to believe that she was

already married, they must not see wedding clothes in preparation. Poor Helen smiled complacently at her own cleverness in thinking of this point, and Frank's carelessness in overlooking it; and then she put the precious letter away in the drawer where the pocket-book lay, for Delphine was in the room, and she thought, with another smile at a fresh instance of her cleverness, that to place the letter in her bosom, as she would have liked to do, would not be a sober, matter-of-course, wife-like proceeding.

"Now, if that letter was only written in French," Delphine had been thinking, while Helen read and re-read it, all unconscious of the avidity to be seen in her face, "I might easily find out the truth, without waiting for a week to know it."

Helen still adhering to her schoolgirl habit of early rising, and she was astir betimes on the following day. She was too young to be sleepless, whatever might betide; benignant slumber had come to her easily, but with the morning there came some troubled thoughts. She wondered how Mr. Townley Gore had taken the news of her flight; she wondered whether it would annoy Frank Lisle very much to find that Delphine knew her, and she feared the week would be very hard to get through.

Towards the possibility of an extension of Frank's absence she would not allow herself to glance. Helen rose, dressed herself noiselessly, and was seated by the window of her little salon, busy with some needlework, and busier with her own thoughts, before Delphine made her appearance, bringing the morning coffee and brioche.

Frank had started on his journey before this hour; he would be in London to-night. The week had begun. She did not know the nature of the business which had called him away. Something about pictures, no doubt. She hoped it might imply another "stroke of luck," whatever that might mean.

Helen's mood was thoughtful, but far from unhappy, on this the first morning of an entirely new life, one of peril of which she had not the slightest comprehension; and although she put the past away from her with a feeling of pain, and shrank, with a vague timidity, from imagining the future in any detail, there was a charm to her heart and her fancy in the present, and she looked serenely beautiful under its influence.

"She is singing canticles," said Delphine to herself, pausing in the arrangement of Helen's bedroom to listen to the pure young voice uplifted in the familiar music of a hymn learned at the Hill House. "I think she must be married, for those English people are quite good when they are good at all, my uncle Devrient says; and she would not sing hymns if she was not good at all."

The first day of Helen's new life passed away. It had not been dull or oppressive, though there were moments in it when she longed exceedingly to be free to communicate with Jane Merrick, to tell her the good news, the wonder which her happy destiny had wrought for her, and to receive Jane's counsel and congratulation.

That good time would come soon; it was but waiting for a little. Madame Moreau kept the engagement for which Frank Lisle had given her earnest of liberal payment; all Helen's wants were supplied, all her comforts were attended to.

Among other thoughts that came to her during the day were some that had almost frightened her by making her feel as if she had somehow or other been transformed into another person. They were the remembrance of how short a time it was since she had first seen Frank, how suddenly, by what a mere accident, he had come into her life, and changed it, himself becoming all its motive and its meaning, she could not tell how. It seemed almost terrifying to be a creature to whom such a strange thing could happen, for whom one phase of existence could close, and another, in which everything was new, could open, so suddenly. Only that love was the one supreme good, and love was hers, and so everything was stable and secure, she might have been possessed by dread of a world in which such change could be, and human beings seem the mere playthings of chance.

Helen had read of travellers, attracted by irresistible curiosity to look down into some awful canon in the vast American country, and crawling backward from the edge of the terrific rift with its vaporous gloom, and dark rush of water at a hideous depth below, sick, giddy, and helpless, and there was something in her own mind akin to the physical impression made upon them. She kept it away from her, but it was there; if she looked that way the terror and the giddiness



would come. She must not look that way. Frank Lisle loved her, had rescued her from dependence and misery, would be with her, to make her his wife, in a week. Those were the blessed truths she had to think about, and she would think of nothing else. She would be practical, and not dreamy; and so she filled the hours with occupation. She practised the most difficult music she knew, she worked, she read, she talked to Delphine on safe and general subjects, and when the night came she fell asleep with the hope before her of a letter from Frank Lisle on the morrow. He had not told her that he would write from some point of his journey, but he knew so well that in reality she would have nothing but his letters to live on, that he would be sure to write to her, bidding her to be of good cheer because he loved her.

The morning came, and Helen again rose early; but this time she found it difficult to settle to any employment; she was at that weary work of watching for the post that most of us know. When Delphine brought her coffee, she asked whether the postman had passed, and being told that he had, she asked whether letters from England were delivered later at Neuilly than inside Paris. There was very little difference, Delphine said; but at any rate that morning's mail had been delivered, madame could have no letters now until evening. There was nothing for it then except to wish for the evening, and Helen set about doing so; but later a happy thought struck her, and cured her disappointment. Frank had not written from any point of his journey short of the other side, because a French postmark might have been observed. Of course, that was his reason; his letter from London would arrive to-night. Helen's spirits rallied with this fortunate reflection, and she got through the second day as pleasantly as she had passed the first. It was a dismal day, heavy, ceaseless, chilling rain fell from morning until night, and there was no getting out of doors. In the evening Delphine remarked that madame was looking pale, and that her fine colour would suffer if she was shut up too much. The observation chased Helen's paleness away; she was again at the work of watching the post. But her watching was in vain; no letter from Frank Lisle reached her on that evening either. Sleep did not knit up the ravelled sleeve of Helen's care so deftly and so rapidly that night; but it

came at last, and refreshed her for the morrow, which must surely bring her the longed-for letter.

It is useless to dwell on this epoch of the story of Helen Rhodes; for the record would have only a wearisome sameness; the dreary monotony of disappointment, the deadly suggestion of alarm. The week of waiting went over her head somehow, but the silence remained unbroken; not one word, not one token of Frank Lisle's existence reached the homeless, friendless, defenceless girl who had trusted him "for all in all."

### JULIUS CÆSAR.

To Plutarch's *Lives*, "done into English" by Sir Thomas North with the help of Amyot's French translation, Shakespeare made frequent application. In the poet's limited library—a shelf or two would have contained it—North's book held an honoured place. It was first published in 1579; Warton has bestowed upon it the title of Shakespeare's "Store-house of learned history."

When the poet bethought him of writing his tragedy of Julius Cæsar, he naturally turned to North's version of Plutarch's lives of Cæsar and of Marcus Brutus. It is believed, however, that there existed an earlier play dealing with the subject, and that, after his usual manner, Shakespeare may in some degree have availed himself of the labours of the dramatist, his predecessor. Mr. Payne Collier professes to have found traces in contemporary manuscripts and accounts of a performance at Whitehall before the Queen, on the 1st February 1562, at night, of a drama or masque, called *Julius Sesar*, supported by divers goodly men of arms in gilt harness, "with trumpets, drums, a hundred torch-lights, a hundred cheynes of gold, etc." Mr. Collier views this as the earliest instance on record of an English play founded upon the events of Roman history.

Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* was first published in the folio edition of 1623. It is more correctly printed than any other play, and may, therefore, have been set-up directly from the original manuscript of the author. The tragedy is supposed to have come upon the stage at a much earlier date, however. In John Weever's *Mirror of Martyrs*, or *The Life and Death of that thrice valiant Captain and most godly*



Martyr, Sir John Oldcastle, Knight, Lord Cobham, published in 1601, occur the lines:

The many-headed multitude was drawn  
By Brutus' speech that Cæsar was ambitious;  
When eloquent Mark Antony had shown  
His virtues, who but Brutus then was vicious?

There is nothing in Plutarch to warrant these verses, which seem clearly applicable to Shakespeare's play, and are, therefore, evidence of its performance some time before the publication of Weever's book. It has been conjectured that in his *Julius Cæsar*, Shakespeare desired to teach a political lesson to his countrymen, and that his tragedy is a direct result of Essex's desperate rebellion against Queen Elizabeth, which terminated in his imprisonment, trial, and execution on the 25th February, 1601.

Julius Cæsar, no doubt, enjoyed considerable popularity upon its first production, and long afterwards. There is record of the performance of the tragedy before the king and queen at Hampton Court, in January, 1637, some few years before the closing of the theatres; and *Julius Cæsar* certainly reappeared upon the stage shortly after the Restoration and the re-establishment of histrionic exhibitions; although, as an authority has suggested, Brutus could be no favourite in the reign of Charles the Second, "when government was a factious conspiracy against the rights of the people, and every friend of liberty was branded as a fomentor of sedition." About the year 1671 *Julius Cæsar* was revived at the Theatre Royal with Hart as Brutus, Kynaston as Antony, Mohun as Cassius, and Bell as Cæsar, the characters of Portia and Calphurnia being sustained by Mrs. Corbet and Mrs. Marshall respectively. Downes, in his *Roscian Anglicanus*, specially commends Hart's excellence as Brutus and Mohun's fine performance of Cassius, adding, "in short, in all his parts he was most accurate and correct." Rymer, critic and historiographer; in his *Tragedies of the Past Age Considered*, 1678, greatly applauds the two actors, pronouncing them "wanting in nothing." In an epilogue by the Earl of Rochester, Mohun's merits as an actor find signal commendation, and his performance of Cassius is particularly referred to.

In 1684 *Julius Cæsar* was played at the Theatre Royal, with the great Mr. Betterton as Brutus, Kynaston reappearing as Mark Antony, and Cassius being played by Smith, an esteemed actor who had quitted the bar for the stage, and had for a while joined the army of James the Second

as a volunteer. The notorious Cardell Goodman personated *Julius Cæsar*, the low comedian Griffin undertook the part of Casca, Portia and Calphurnia being performed by a Mrs. Cook and by Lady Slingsby, a titled actress of whom little is known, but that she figured upon the stage for some years after the Restoration, her theatrical career closing in 1685. From a reference in the first number of *The Tatler* it may be gathered that Betterton was wont occasionally to assume the character of Mark Antony. The decline of Will's coffee-house is described: in lieu of songs, epigrams, and satires, packs of cards are said to be in the hands of all its frequenters; and where once there prevailed great cavilling about terms of expression, elegance of style and the like, there now only arose disputes about "the truth of the game." Steele proceeds: "But however the company is altered, all have shown a great respect for Mr. Betterton; and the very gaming part of the house have been so touched with a sense of the uncertainty of human affairs (which alter with themselves every moment), that in this gentleman they pitied Mark Antony of Rome, Hamlet of Denmark, Mithridates of Pontus, Theodosius of Greece, and Henry the Eighth of England. It is well known that he has been in the condition of each of these illustrious personages for several hours together, and behaved himself in those high stations, in all the changes of the scene, with suitable dignity." In a later *Tatler*, published after the actor's death, and relating the circumstances of his funeral in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey, Steele describes feelingly his own sorrows upon the occasion: "I was resolved to walk thither," he writes, "and see the last office done to a man whom I had always very much admired, and from whose action I had received more strong impressions of what is great and noble in human nature than from the arguments of the most solid philosophers, or the descriptions of the most charming poets I had read . . . . While I walked in the cloister I thought of him with the same concern as if I waited for the remains of a person who had in real life done all that I had seen him represent. The gloom of the place and faint lights before the ceremony appeared contributed to the melancholy disposition I was in; and I began to be extremely afflicted that Brutus and Cassius had any difference; that Hotspur's gallantry was so

unfortunate; and that the mirth and good humour of Falstaff could not exempt him from the grave."

In 1707, for the encouragement of the comedians acting at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket and "to enable them to keep the diversion of plays under a separate interest from that of operas," Lord Halifax proposed a subscription for reviving three plays of the best authors, to be supported by the full strength of the company. By his lordship's interest this project was successfully carried into execution. The boxes were made to include the pit, probably in the manner of the modern stalls; and no person was admitted who did not possess a subscriber's ticket. A payment of three guineas entitled the subscriber to three tickets for each performance.

The plays chosen for performance were *Julius Cæsar*, Fletcher's *King and No King*, and a combination of the comic scenes contained in Dryden's *Maiden Queen* and his *Marriage à la Mode*. By means of this subscription the actors obtained payment of their overdue salaries and the manager was a considerable gainer. *Julius Cæsar* was supported by the Brutus of Betterton, the Cassius of Verbruggen, the Antony of Wilks, the Cæsar of Booth, the Calphurnia of Mrs. Barry, and the Portia of Mrs. Bracegirdle.

Though Cæsar gives his name to the tragedy, he is by no means its most important personage. He appears but seldom, says little, and is murdered in the third act. The character has rarely been assumed by histrionic artists of the first class. Cæsar, like *Cymbeline*, *Duncan*, and *Claudius*, is of inferior consequence in regard to his playfellows. Nor can it be said that Portia and Calphurnia are parts such as leading actresses usually covet. The wives of Cæsar and Brutus are not seen upon the stage after the second act of the tragedy. *Julius Cæsar* is remarkable, however, in that it contains three characters such as actors judge to be of equal value and significance; of no other play in the whole dramatic repertory can as much be said. Brutus has been described as the real hero of *Julius Cæsar*, but the characters of Cassius and Mark Antony have been found to afford equally fine histrionic opportunities to their representatives.

Apparently *Julius Cæsar* has offered few temptations to the adapters, and has comparatively escaped the processes of mangling and mutilation to which other of the

plays of Shakespeare have been subjected. It occurred to John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, however, that inasmuch as the play contained a double plot, two tragedies might be carved out of it, the one to be entitled *Julius Cæsar*, the other *The Death of Marcus Brutus*. These works were never brought upon the stage, although specially designed for performance "after the manner of the ancients, with musical choruses between the acts." The choruses at the close of the first and second acts of *Marcus Brutus* are said to have been written by Pope at the command of the Duke. Dr. Johnson, in his *Lives of the Poets*, included memoirs of his Grace of Buckingham, but curiously forbore to mention his Shakespearian tragedies, which were published in 1722. The duke was a feeble writer; certain of the lines of his original he preserved, and they have the effect of jewels set in clay; his own verses have been described as "correctly cold and regularly dull." To Casca's forcible narration of Cæsar's refusal of the crown offered him by Mark Antony at the Lupercal games, the duke has given dramatic action; but the scene is curiously insipid. As Cæsar put from him the crown amid the applause of the populace, he observes prosaically:

I am glad, my friends, you are so easily pleased  
With my refusing what I think below me, etc.

In *Marcus Brutus* new characters are introduced. Junia, wife to Cassius, and sister to Brutus, Dolabella, Varius, a young Roman, studying at Athens, etc.

In 1715, Barton Booth was playing Brutus at Drury Lane, with Elrington, from Ireland, as Cassius, Wilks as Antony, Mills as Cæsar, and Mrs. Porter as Portia. Three years later, at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, for the benefit of Ryan, who undertook the part of Cassius, Quin appeared as Mark Antony, an actor named Keen representing Brutus, with Mrs. Rogers as Portia. In 1734, at Drury Lane, Quin was Brutus, with Mills as Cassius, and Milward as Antony, Theophilus Cibber personating Casca, and the comic actors, Johnson, Miller, Griffin, Harper, Macklin, and others appearing as the citizens of Rome. This seems to have been a revival of some importance. It was specially notified in the playbill that, by his Majesty's command, no person would be admitted behind the scenes. Davies, in his *Miscellanies*, particularly commends the performance of the part of the second citizen, the cobbler who leads the populace

about that they may the more wear out their shoes and provide him with work, by the comedian Ben Johnson, a veteran who remained on the stage until he was within two years of eighty, "but whose very dregs were respectable." In regard to a later performance, Davies relates of an actor named Winstone, that the "assumed doggedness and sourness of Casca sat well upon him."

Garrick at one time desired, it is said, to attempt the character of Cassius, "pleased with its spirit and fire," but he relinquished the project, presumably because he feared "too well the consequence of his competitor Quin" in the part of Brutus. Davies, being of opinion that Garrick did not lack actors of merit capable of rendering justice to the play, regrets that it was not revived during his management. In 1747, Garrick being absent at Covent Garden, Julius Cæsar was produced at Drury Lane, with Barry as Antony, Delane as Brutus, and Sparks as Cassius. Three years later, Barry resumed the character of Antony, at Covent Garden, with Quin as Brutus, Ryan as Cassius, and Mrs. Woffington as Portia—a strong cast. In 1755, at the same theatre, Julius Cæsar was revived. Smith—destined to be the original Charles Surface—representing Antony, to the Brutus of Sheridan, the Cassius of Ryan, and the Portia of Mrs. Hamilton.

Voltaire wrote his three-act tragedy, *La Mort de César*, professedly that he might afford his countrymen "a perfect idea of the taste of the English in tragedy." In the French play no female characters are allowed to occupy the scene; Brutus appears as the son of Cæsar, by Servilia the sister of Cato; and Brutus is permitted to stab Cæsar with a full knowledge that he is murdering his father and benefactor. *La Mort de César* is, in truth, one of the poorest of Voltaire's productions. Nevertheless, Aaron Hill was tempted to adapt this play to the English stage, and accordingly derived from it his *Roman Revenge*, which was represented some few times at Bath, but failed to obtain admission to a London theatre, both Quin and Garrick declining to personate the leading character, although every effort had been made to render Cæsar an attractive part to the players. Hill had strengthened the tragedy by the introduction of Portia and Calphurnia, who are supposed to have been sworn friends from childhood, and by the invention of a new character, one Trinobantius, a British tribune, who describes himself as an old

soldier in Cæsar's service, offers to protect him from the senate by means of a body-guard of Britons, and afterwards vows to avenge his death, and procure Britannia's liberty. Cæsar, pursuant to classical prescription, is killed behind the scenes; and the play concludes with Mark Antony's speech to the citizens, borrowed in great part from Shakespeare. The *Roman Revenge* was dedicated to Lord Bolingbroke, who informed the author that he had, with Mr. Pope, read the play, and found it "finely wrote, the characters admirably well drawn, and the statements noble, beyond the power of words fully to express." Between authors and their patrons much adulatory and panegyrical language was wont to pass in the eighteenth century. His lordship wrote further, that if, with Mr. Pope, he doubted whether "in some few instances the utmost effort of language had not obscured the beauty and force of thought," he yet found *The Roman Revenge* to be "one of the noblest dramas that our language or any age could boast," and felt "a laudable vanity in being esteemed the friend as well as the admirer of so great a writer" as Mr. Aaron Hill. With more justice, Tom Davies pronounces the play with many admirable sentiments and some affecting scenes, "so stiffened with epithet, bespangled with antithesis, and decorated with pointed thoughts marked in italic letters," that the players could not have uttered the lines trippingly, while the audience would have disapproved "a Brutus, so differently drawn from that of their favourite Shakespeare, a patriot who could lift his murdering sword against his own father." Genest says bluntly of Hill's play: "It has some good lines in it, but on the whole it is superlatively dull." An early "*Monarchicke tragedy*," as it is called, upon the subject of Julius Cæsar, written by Sir William Alexander, of Menstrie, gentleman of the Prince's privy-chamber, and afterwards first Earl of Sterling, was published in 1607, before Shakespeare's tragedy was acted, as Malone imagines. In any case, Shakespeare certainly owed nothing to Alexander, who has been accurately judged to have been "a man of good natural abilities, but utterly destitute of any skill in the drama; his plays sensible but dull in the extreme; he begins each with a play of enormous length by way of prologue, and concludes each act with a chorus."

In 1766, Julius Cæsar was again presented at Covent Garden, Portia being personated



by Mrs. Bellamy, Cassius by Smith, Antony by Ross, and Brutus by a tragedian named Walker, who, at the close of the fourth act, delivered certain spurious lines borrowed from an altered edition of the play first published in 1719, and ascribed to Dryden and Davenant:

Sure they have raised some devil to their aid,  
And think to frighten Brutus with a shade;  
But ere the night closes this fatal day,  
I'll send more ghosts this visit to repay.

But although Dryden and Davenant mangled *The Tempest*, they assuredly had no hand in this altered version of *Julius Cæsar*, which was simply a publication of the prompter's book, into which sundry corruptions of the text had been admitted. In the edition of the tragedy published in 1684, "as acted at the Theatre Royal," the absurd passage ranted by Mr. Walker finds no place; it is undoubtedly of later date. Genest, by-the-way, denounces prompt-books in general, as "sinks of iniquity." In 1773, Smith reappeared as Antony; Hull, Bensley, and Mrs. Hartley, all for the first time essaying the characters of Cassius, Brutus, and Portia respectively. The tragedy was next played at Drury Lane, in 1780; Smith was still the Antony, with Henry as Cassius, Palmer as Brutus, and Mrs. Baddeley as Portia.

It was not until rather late in his career that John Kemble thought it well to revive *Julius Cæsar*; his acting edition of the tragedy bears the date of 1811. At Covent Garden, on the 29th of February, 1812, *Julius Cæsar* was presented with a cast of very special strength. John Kemble appeared as Brutus, Young as Cassius, Charles Kemble as Antony, Fawcett as Casca, with Mrs. Powell and Mrs. Weston as Portia and Calphurnia—or Porcia and Calpurnia, as Kemble was pleased to designate them. The representation was received with great favour, and was repeated upon some eighteen occasions. Boaden credits Kemble with "some very judicious alterations and arrangements in the piece," and with an impersonation of Brutus remarkable for its purity, philosophy, and patriotism. "The stage," he writes, "had realised, perhaps exceeded, the effect of one of the most important scenes of antiquity." The Rev. Julian Young, in his *Memoirs of his father*, describes the revival enthusiastically, though he seems to have been mistaken in assigning the characters of Casca and Portia to Terry and Mrs. Siddons. "No piece was ever more effectively cast. . . . I have

never spoken with anyone fortunate enough to have seen this play rendered as it then was, who has not admitted it to have been the greatest intellectual recreation he ever enjoyed. It was really difficult to believe that one had not been transported, while in a state of unconsciousness, from the purlieus of Bow Street and the vicinity of Covent Garden Market, to the glories of the Capitol and the very heart of the Julian Forum; so complete in all its parts was the illusion of the scene. When but six years old I saw the play on the first night of its representation; and I was allowed to see it again in 1817, with the same cast, minus Mrs. Siddons. . . . One would have imagined that the invariable white toga, beautiful as it is when properly worn and tastefully adjusted, would have rendered it difficult at first for any but frequenters of the theatre to distinguish in the large number of the dramatis personæ on the stage, John Kemble from Daniel Terry, or Charles Young from Charles Kemble. Whereas, I feel persuaded, that any intelligent observer, though he had never entered the walls of a theatre before, if he had studied the play in his closet, would have had no difficulty in recognising in the calm, cold, self-contained, stoical dignity of John Kemble's walk, the very ideal of Marcus Brutus; or in the pale, wan, austere, lean and hungry look of Young, and in his quick and nervous pace, the irritability and restless impetuosity of Caius Cassius; or in the handsome joyous face, and graceful tread of Charles Kemble—his pliant body bending forward in courtly adulation of Great Cæsar—Mark Antony himself; while Terry's sour sarcastic countenance would not more aptly portray 'quick-mettled' Casca, than his abrupt and hasty stamp upon the ground when Brutus asked him, 'What had chanced that Cæsar was so sad?'"

In 1819 *Julius Cæsar* was performed at Covent Garden for Young's benefit, when he took the part of Brutus, Macready appearing as Cassius, and Frederick Yates as Casca. Young's Brutus was less admired than his Cassius; the Brutus of Kemble was, perhaps, too freshly remembered by the audience. Macready was young for the part—he was but twenty-six—but he seems to have distinguished himself as Cassius. "Between Young and myself," he wrote, "there was something of a feeling of rivalry, which, however, did not interfere with the courtesy that, although distant was always maintained between us.

I made it a point to oblige him on the occasion of his benefits, and this year (1819) studied for him in Julius Cæsar, the 'lean and wrinkled Cassius,' a part, in the representation of which, I have through my professional life taken peculiar pleasure as one among Shakespeare's most perfect specimens of idiosyncrasy." Three years later Macready had further opportunities of improving himself in the part. He records: "I entered 'con amore' into the study of the character of Cassius, identifying myself with the eager ambition, the keen penetration, and the restless envy of the determined conspirator, which, from that time, I made one of my most real personations." Julius Cæsar had, meantime, been presented at Drury Lane, with Wallack as Brutus, Cooper as Antony, and Junius Brutus Booth as Cassius, with Pope as Casca, and Mrs. West as Portia. An admirer writes of Booth's Cassius that "his noble head, mobile features, and spare figure gave him a singular external fitness for the part. It is added that his Cassius was "signalled by one action of characteristic excellence and originality. After Cæsar had been encompassed and stabbed by the conspirators, and lay extended on the floor of the senate-house, Booth strode right across the dead body and out of the scene in silent and disdainful triumph." At Boston, in 1837, Booth appeared as Cassius to the Brutus of Edwin Forrest.

Macready seems not to have represented Brutus until 1836, when Julius Cæsar was carefully revived at Covent Garden, under Mr. Osbaldiston's management. Macready writes curiously of Brutus: "It is one of those characters that requires peculiar care, which only repetition can give, but it never can be a part that can inspire a person with an eager desire to go to a theatre to see represented." He continued to play Brutus, however, from time to time, and particularly upon his revival of Julius Cæsar, in 1843, during his tenancy of Drury Lane Theatre. In 1845 he notes of his performance of the character at Liverpool: "Acted Brutus very unsatisfactorily; I really strove, was often, not always, self-possessed, but did not seem at all in possession of the audience . . . the house did not seem to give me their sympathy." Of his efforts three years later in London he gives a better account: "Acted Brutus in a very masterly manner. I do not think I ever acted it with the same feeling, force, and reality." Upon his return to England in 1849, after the fatal rioting in

New York, he was invited to take part in the theatrical performances at Windsor Castle, over which Mr. Charles Kean had been appointed director. The Queen had expressed a desire to see Macready perform Hotspur and Brutus. The part of Hotspur he felt himself compelled to decline: he had long ceased to appear as Hotspur, and was unfitted by his age to personate it; he could scarcely now restudy it. His excuses were accepted, and it was arranged that he should appear as Brutus only. In December, 1849, "the day bitterly cold, with drifting snow and sharp frost," he journeyed to Windsor Castle, was received by Colonel Phipps, and was shown the Rubens room, the theatre of the castle, the position of the stage, the dressing-rooms, etc. being explained to him. The performance took place on the 1st February, 1850, the actor at the time being deeply distressed by the mortal illness of his eldest daughter Nina, who died, indeed, only a week later. He writes in his diary: "Dressed; went to Windsor by railway, taking at the Paddington station a special engine to return at night, for which I paid seven guineas. Dined at the Castle Inn. Went in cab to the Castle: passed with my ticket into my room, a very handsome one, partitioned off from a passage. . . . Dressed; was kept in a state of irritable expectation. Mr. Wallack came to speak to me. Acted Brutus in a style of reality and earnest naturalness, that I think did, and I felt ought to, produce an effect on my auditors. I cannot describe the scene; my Nina agitates my heart and shakes my nerves; I cannot write. Colonel Phipps came to me from the Queen and Prince Albert to express how much they had been pleased. I requested him to offer my duty, and that I was most happy in the opportunity of offering my testimony of my respectful homage. Came away by special train." In January, 1851, during a round of final performances at the Haymarket Theatre, he took leave of the characters of Brutus and Cassius. The critics judged his Cassius to be the superior impersonation. The restlessness, irritability, and impetuosity of Cassius better suited the actor's temperament and histrionic method than the calmness, the self-control, and the dignity of Brutus. His noble delivery of the soliloquies of Brutus was much admired, however; and he seems to have been completely satisfied with his own assumption. Of his last appearance in the character he writes: "Acted Brutus as I never—no, never—

acted it before, in regard to dignified familiarity of dialogue, or enthusiastic inspiration of lofty purpose. The tenderness, the reluctance to deeds of violence, the instinctive abhorrence of tyranny, the open simplicity of heart and natural grandeur of soul, I never so perfectly, so consciously portrayed before. I think the audience felt it."

Julius Caesar was occasionally represented at Sadler's Wells during the earlier years of Mr. Phelps's occupation of that theatre, which commenced in 1844. The lessee was then wont to play Brutus to the Cassius of Mr. George Bennett, the Mark Antony of Mr. Henry Marston, and the Portia now of Mrs. Warner, and now of Miss Glyn. Performances of the tragedy also took place at Drury Lane, in 1850, when Mr. J. R. Anderson undertook the management of that theatre, and appeared as Mark Antony, with Mr. Vandenhoff as Brutus, and Mr. Cathcart as Cassius. But for many years past there has been scarcely any attempt to produce Julius Caesar upon the English stage.

#### LUNAR GEOLOGY.

WHOEVER has bought a tolerably good map of the Moon's sole visible hemisphere, and has hung it up beside or between maps of our Earth's eastern and western hemispheres, must have been struck by their utter dissimilarity. They look as if they had nothing whatever in common. They seem to be representations and types of two perfectly distinct classes, or families of heavenly bodies, separated from each other as the living are from the dead or from those who have never lived at all. And such, in fact, turns out to be the case.

Nothing, at first sight, can be more excusable than the supposition that the Moon should be a globe constituted in most respects very like the Earth. The older astronomers endowed it with seas and marshes, such as the Mare Putredinis, and so forth. Up to the present day, it has possessed volcanos, and plenty of them. Quite recently, an observer of considerable repute, deserved popularity, and vivid imagination, saw, or fancied he saw, a bright light or flame issuing from one of the said volcanos.

Lunar volcanos in activity? Ah! Drive gently, if you please, astronomical coachman, over the rugged stones of doubt. When a boy, at Mechanics' Institutes, I

had attended lectures at which some local savant showed, with his air-pump, that flame went out, that fire lost its motive powers, that lighted charcoal would cool but would not burn, under his exhausted receiver. But air in the Moon, if any, must be considerably rarer than the rarest vacuum obtainable by our best pneumatic machines.

Many people, consequently, have had secret misgivings about the authenticity of the Moon's volcanos. I have had mine, as hinted above; and they have been brought to a conclusive crisis by the perusal of the very lucid *Comparaison de la Lune et de la Terre au Point de Vue Géologique* which M. Faye has contributed as a *Notice Scientifique* to this year's *Annuaire du Bureau des Longitudes*. Our readers are already acquainted with the clear and convincing manner in which M. Faye elucidates every astronomical and meteorological problem which he takes in hand. And those who can read French will find it well worth their while to purchase the *Annuaire*, if only for the chance of finding it enriched by one of M. Faye's very valuable essays.

But let us now return to the Moon, whither our present business urges us. It is assumed by astronomers that all the planetary bodies of our system, and their satellites, when they first took independent existence and definite form after separation from the primeval nebular mass, were globes in a state of liquid fusion, in consequence of intense heat. Farther back we need not attempt to go. Time was, we are told, when all the planets, together with their central sun, were nothing but one widespread fiery mist, glowing with intensest heat. And before that, what? What was the cause or the predecessor of the chaotic heat? And before that, what again? What was the cause of the prior cause? And so on, till the mind is utterly lost.

The cause both of the formation of the planets and of the spreading of a solid crust over the surface of our molten globe, is held to be the gradual cooling of our solar system, and, with it, of the Earth and her singular attendant, the Moon. By cooling, that is by the radiation of heat into open space, which gives back so little, all those planetary bodies have become, some completely solid, as our Moon and probably the satellites of the other planets; others, as the Earth, covered with a thin solid crust, like an egg-shell, enclosing a fused incandescent nucleus;



others, like Jupiter, whose still uncooled surface is believed to be hidden from our view only by a thick screen of atmospheric vapours.

Thus far, then, the Earth and the Moon have this in common—that they both were once molten globes, small suns, in fact, revolving in company round one great centre of attraction. The Moon, naturally, being much the smaller, cooled much faster than the Earth. But as the cooling process went on, the community between their material conditions gradually ceased. On the Earth's outer shell, as soon as the temperature became sufficiently moderate, Life soon appeared. On the Moon, organic life never has existed; and it never will, because it never can, exist. In a world which contains neither air, nor water, nor gas, nor liquid of any kind whatever, Life, as far as we are acquainted with it, is utterly inconceivable.

The Moon, inspected with the most powerful instruments, shows not the slightest trace of vegetation, which, if present, would be betrayed by the varied colourings of the ground. Instead of which, all we behold are vast white tracts, like our own naked chalky soils, blazing in brilliant sunshine, or else plains of a dingier hue, resembling our ordinary basalts and trachytes. The alternation of the seasons (whose contrasted differences are not considerable in the Moon) brings with it no perceptible change. In the whole range of science of observation, M. Faye knows no fact more clearly established than the absence of water, of atmosphere, and consequently of life, upon our satellite. He vividly describes the impression made upon him by the first sight of the occultation of a star by our airless attendant. And yet, no physical truth has been more discussed, contested, and looked at in a greater variety of ways, than this.

The notion of a roomy, substantial, well-lighted, and well-warmed heavenly body, without living and conscious inhabitants, appears to be abhorrent to many minds. A mansion so conveniently suspended in space seems naturally to call for active and intelligent tenants. "To let" is so legibly written on its façade that many would surely be glad to take possession of and occupy its spacious apartments. Its emptiness, they think—if it be empty—would be a waste of available accommodation. The popular and pleasant idea of a Universe is, a Universe filled with living creatures. The Moon, people are apt to say and

believe, if it be not, certainly ought to be inhabited.

M. Faye quietly answers those who would persuade themselves of the universal spread of life, by simply reminding them of a few plain facts. Amongst the members of our little solar system, there is one—and that the leading member—of which it may be safely stated that it never has been, and never will be, inhabited: namely, the Sun. At present, it is completely incandescent. When it has burnt itself out and has cooled down so as to form an external and enclosing crust firm enough to walk upon, it will not be the more habitable for that. It will want another sun, to supply it with the amount of light and heat indispensable for the existence of organised beings possessing a material frame. About angelic or purely spiritual beings, unencumbered by corporeal frames, we possess too little knowledge of observation to be able to speculate with any satisfactory scientific result. The other stars are too far off to render that service of lighting and heating our extinguished Sun. All together (supposing they retain their actual temperature), they would only furnish warmth enough, according to Fourier, to keep it more than two hundred and thirteen degrees above absolute zero—which is only equivalent to minus sixty degrees of the Centigrade scale—and which is still lower, if we believe other physicists. As to the light, we can judge of what they would afford, by what we see contributed by them on a cloudless, clear, moonless night.

Now what is thus stated respecting the Sun, is equally true of the eighteen millions of stars which Herschell's telescope has counted in the heavens. They are separated from each other by intervals as great as those which separate them from the Sun. Not one of them is habitable at present, since they are incandescent; and not one of them ever will be; and that because the first condition of organised life is the presence of a Sun, who must be neither too near nor too far away. Life, therefore, can occur, not in those myriads of stars which we behold every night, but only on certain tiny globes, invisible to us, which circulate round certain stars, as the Earth does round the Sun, under given astronomical circumstances of extremely narrow limits. Besides which, there are numerous geological, physical, chemical, and other conditions of life, each such condition being not less imperative for success than the other. We have only to count the sterile

spots and adverse influences palpable on our own inhabited globe, to perceive how far some modern philosophers are out of their reckoning, when they fill the Universe with a fancy population.

Stay-at-home people who are tempted to fancy that there are no absolutely uninhabitable regions on Earth, should go and fix their residence in latitude eighty degrees, north or south; or, if they prefer a warmer climate, with plenty of sunshine all the year round, they can choose between Asiatic and African wastes and wildernesses, and settle either in mid Sahara, beneath the Tropic of Cancer, or in the Desert of Gobi, in the North Temperate Zone, as they please. Very short experience will teach them that "habitable" is not an epithet applicable to lands that can merely be traversed on camel or horseback by parties carrying with them all provisions, both liquid and solid, as the indispensable condition of safely reaching their journey's end — namely, countries that are truly habitable, because able to sustain life by something besides pure air.

The first things that strike us on looking at the Moon, are the dusky so-called seas, visible by the naked eye, spoken of by Plutarch long ago in his treatise, *De facie in orbe Lunæ*, and which vaguely suggest the popular figure of the Man in the Moon carrying a bundle of sticks, and followed by his dog.

Another most remarkable feature is the predominance of circular, crater-shaped formations, of all dimensions, with which the moon is pitted and pock-marked all over its whitest and most brilliant regions. The darker parts, with a less defined outline, protruding one into the other, are also circular. But, nota bene, there are no chains of mountains. The objects named Apennines and Alps by selenographers, are series of isolated peaks rising in the middle, or more frequently on the borders of a plain; and they have no more relationship with their terrestrial namesakes than the Mare Serenitatis or the Mare Somnium have with the Caspian or the Mediterranean.

Next to be remarked are the bright radiations, of which the grandest cluster is centred round the magnificent circus of Tycho. They are luminous stripes diverging from a centre and stretching to immense distances, unchecked and uninterrupted by any irregularity of the soil. A good idea of their appearance is conveyed by the cracks in a large pane of plate-glass, against which a stone has been thrown.

The general aspect of these strange lunar landscapes answers perfectly to the complete absence of water and air. Nothing is to be seen resembling sediments, erosions, boulders transported to a distance, or other unmistakable signs of wear and tear occasioned by liquid or gaseous agents. The lofty ridges are clean, the peaks sharp-pointed, the inner slopes of the cirques astonishingly steep. The only signs of dilapidation are blocks scattered at the foot of certain prominences from which they have been detached by the very considerable variations of temperature between the Moon's days and nights—from minus one hundred degrees Centigrade, perhaps, to a heat superior to that of boiling water. The rapid expansions and contractions thence resulting, acting on masses of friable stone in rocky precipices out of the perpendicular, would easily detach the fragments which powerful telescopes show scattered at the bottom of the cirques. If the Moon had ever, at any former epochs, possessed oceans and an atmosphere, they would have proved their existence by leaving traces similar to those which we everywhere observe upon Earth.

The only thing which, at the outset, will puzzle an observer, and which seems directly to contradict what has been previously asserted, is the resemblance which he will not fail to note between the lunar cirques and the craters of our volcanos. "The analogy is such," says Poulett-Scrope, "that it is impossible to doubt a single instant of the volcanic character of the lunar crust."

"Most of these craters," says Sir J. Herschell, "are singularly uniform. They are wonderfully numerous, occupying the greater portion of the visible surface of the Moon, and are almost all exactly circular or cup-shaped. In short, they present, in its highest perfection, the true volcanic type, exactly as we see it in the crater of Vesuvius, or in a map of the Phlegrean fields or of the Puy-de-Dôme."

These are great authorities. But, as M. Faye unanswerably puts it, what weight have scientific authorities against a syllogism based on good premises, such as this: There can be no volcanos without the intervention of vapours or gases? As there is neither the one nor the other in the Moon, ergo, the lunar cirques are not volcanos. And how, in fact, can you have explosions and eruptions without the instrumentality of elastic gases? How are materials, in igneous fusion but still below

their point of dissociation, and containing neither a bubble of air nor a drop of water—how are they to project and shoot thousands of yards high other materials equally devoid of gases and simply melted by heat? Chemistry has not yet revealed to us the existence of substances capable of such feats.

Certainly, there is in the lunar circuses, in that of Maurolycus as in all the others, something which does not at first sight strike the eye. This something is a geometrical, essential, decisive character, proper to all the pretended lunar volcanos, but which is just the opposite to terrestrial volcanos. M. Faye formulates the difference in precise terms—thus, earthly volcanos are conical mountains, some thousands of yards high, bearing on their summit a crater some hundred yards deep; whilst the lunar circuses are depressions, pits, whose circumscribing rim is some hundreds of yards high and the bottom is several thousands of yards deep.

In all terrestrial volcanos, the crater is always at a considerable elevation above the base of the mountain—a characteristic which is a necessary result of the mechanism by which an eruption is produced. Another distinctive feature is that, at every eruption, the lava, as it issues, assumes the form of a river of fire descending the side of the mountain where the slope is steepest. It is a natural consequence of the lava's flowing from a spot which is higher than the ambient ground. The lunar circuses, on the contrary, present the double peculiarity that their bottom is below the ambient ground, and that the overflows of melted matters, which form their enclosing rampart, are circular instead of streamlike. There are no outpoured currents of lava properly so-called, like those which well out from Vesuvius and Etna.

Nor may it be supposed that the depth of the bottom is a trifling hollow. It is enormous. The average circuses are abysses several thousands of yards deep. Nothing on earth can give us the slightest idea of what they are. If they impress us but faintly when we behold them through our telescopes, the reason is that the moon is ninety-six thousand leagues away from us. One of the illustrations of M. Faye's Notice is a section of the Circus of Copernicus, whose measurements have been taken with great precision. The crest of this circus is more than two thousand six hundred feet above the

ambient ground, and very nearly eleven thousand three hundred feet above the bottom. Consequently the bottom lies, in round numbers, eight thousand seven hundred feet below the ground-level, and is, therefore, considerably more than half as deep as Mont Blanc is high. Altitudes on the Earth are obviously and logically calculated from the level of the sea. The Moon has no ocean from whose surface to measure upwards or downwards; but its plains, above which the circus walls rise, being almost as regularly level as the expanse of a sea, supply us with an analogous standard of altitude.

If there were water in any quantity in the Moon, would not these excessively deep circuses be partially or wholly filled with it? In most of the habitable parts of the Earth, how many steam-pumps would have to be kept going, to drain such a circus as that of Copernicus? As to any outbreaks of lava, they are seen in the plan of this same circus (also given as an illustration) deposited circularly around it, so as to form the brim enclosing this gigantic well.

On a point of this importance, M. Faye does not merely insist on the accurate measurements of very numerous circuses obtained by astronomers, showing that the depression of their bottoms is twice, thrice, or four times greater than the elevation of their rim. The reader can convince himself by a most simple proceeding. He has only to take one of Rutherford's admirable photographs of the Moon, and, examining each circus, one after the other, to note the shadow thrown on the bottom by the crest of the rim, and then to compare it with the shadow thrown by the other side of the rim on the circumambient soil. In every one of the twenty or thirty thousand circuses seen in the moon, the first shadow is always much longer than the second. The very small circuses display this peculiarity in a still more striking manner. They resemble holes made in a bed of soft clay, by thrusting a stake into it and then drawing it out again. So remarkable a structure speaks for itself. The forces which produced it have evidently nothing in common with those which have upraised our Earth's volcanos.

As, during the cooling process, water was produced on earth, while the elements composing water did not exist in the Moon, what have been the consequences? Geodesical observations have shown that our globe is not the perfect spheroid it ought



to be, but has bulged out here and shrunk in there, after the manner of a battered cricket-ball or a shrivelling orange.\* In M. Faye's Notice, we find clearly explained how this was brought about, while the Moon, on the contrary, remains perfectly round; also how, during the period of cooling, the circuses were formed; and also by what mechanism the Moon's revolution on her axis was gradually slackened, until it provokingly coincided with the time of her revolution round the Earth, so as never to show us more than one-half of her hemispheres, and baffling our curiosity to guess what may be the nature of her other and for-ever-hidden hemisphere. When we remember what M. Faye has already done for science—to mention only his masterly demonstration of the true physical constitution of the Sun—it will be agreed that this and every other Treatise issuing from his pen claims the most serious and attentive consideration.

#### "SHULE AGRA."

A STORY IN SEVEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER III.

I PASS over the next six months briefly. They went by monotonously enough.

I heard twice from Thorne, and the manner in which, in his last letter, he spoke of Miss Cullen, filled me with deep anxiety and pity.

She had apparently never completely recovered from the shock of that night, and now her musical career seemed seriously affected by it. Through the interest of a powerful friend, she had obtained some excellent introductions to the musical world; but there the good news ceased. The plain truth was that she was not equal to the opportunity when it was placed in her hands. Excessive nervousness, acting on an enfeebled voice, had brought about the most unfortunate results. On two occasions, when a favourable press notice would have lifted her up many steps of the ladder, her singing had been almost unrecognisable. She was completely altered, was growing listless, hopeless, incapable of rousing herself to effort, and equally incapable of seeking any other less exacting means of self-support.

By the same mail which brought me this letter came one which changed in a moment the whole aspect of my life. It told me that a relation who had never shown the least interest in me—who had,

in fact, declined to see me, and had absolutely refused to give me a helping hand when I stood in the utmost need of it, had died suddenly, leaving to me every penny of his large fortune.

This news was so astounding that at first I could not realise it.

I read and re-read the brief business-like words which conveyed to me the fact that I owned a country seat in Sussex, one of the finest private collections of pictures in Europe, and a yearly income of seven thousand pounds. I was not conscious of any feeling of elation at my good fortune. The mere fact that I need never do another stroke of work for the rest of my life did not give me the least satisfaction. I had been in harness long enough to know that, however welcome a few months' rest might be, ennui would soon set in after the first novelty of idleness had worn off. I had no extravagant tastes, no ambition.

Half absently I took up that other letter, and as I read again the simple words in which Thorne described Miss Cullen's sad and hopeless position, a sudden thought struck me which set my heart beating with the violence that follows a sudden shock.

I, with this fortune—alone in the world, no human being I cared for to share it with me. That poor girl in England—alone in the world—with failing health and failing powers—with poverty and dependence awaiting her!

Would it be possible? Could she ever bring herself to care for me, after having given away so entirely the first affection of her young heart?

For one moment the thought came—would my wealth influence her decision?

I put it from me as if I had been guilty of a meanness in allowing it to enter my mind.

My presence in London was an imperative necessity, and as soon as arrangements could be made I left India and journeyed homewards. Immediately on arriving I sent a line to Thorne's office. My note was returned to me unopened, with a few lines on the envelope telling me that Mr. and Mrs. Thorne were staying in Paris and would remain there for a month.

There was nothing for it but to plunge into legal affairs, and endeavour, by creating another interest, to make the time hang less heavily. A fortnight later matters were sufficiently in order for me to run down to Sussex and take possession of my new inheritance. I found a quaint old-fashioned house, half hidden in the heart

\* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 16, p. 136, "Geodesy."

of the Sussex hills, with magnificent views of the surrounding country.

Each day brought fresh duties, interests, and occupations. There was so much to be done in the way of exploring and of projecting improvements, so many things to engross my thoughts, that the outside world was, for the time, thrust into the background.

At last, one morning a note was brought to me in Thorne's handwriting. He and his wife were just home again; would I go to his office?

Of course I did not delay.

He had not heard of the sudden change in my fortunes, and naturally thought that I had come to tell him the good news. A nervous dread of opening up the real object of my visit took possession of me. I waited about and occupied his time mercilessly with trivial gossip. At last I suddenly blurted out an enquiry as to when he had seen Miss Cullen last.

Enlightenment, amusement, delight flashed by turns across his face, and he went off into a fit of laughter.

I felt annoyed, as most men do at seeing the affection they have held secretly and sacredly in their hearts laid bare to the irreverent eyes of a careless looker-on, and regarded as something irresistibly comic.

When he had recovered from his amusement and I from my vexation, we had a long and serious talk. He promised to discuss matters with his wife that evening. If she should think it advisable, they would ask Lucy to stay with them. They would both do their best to help me as much for her sake as for mine.

A sickening dread that they might influence her mind by dwelling on the advantages of so wealthy a match chilled me as he spoke. But had I not told myself, again and again, that, even were she to marry me with mere feelings of gratitude, my intense love for her must meet with a return: that in time she must love me?

Thorne asked me if I would dine with him and his wife the next evening. Of course I accepted the invitation.

I fancy my unpunctual habits had been one cause of Mrs. Thorne's former hostility towards me. On this occasion I sinned in the other direction, and reached Dorset Square half an hour before I was expected.

The lamps were not lit in the drawing-room, a drowsy fire was burning, and by its light I could distinguish a slight figure in black half buried in a low arm-chair.

"I do not know if you remember me,"

a soft voice said. "I think you are Mr. Blaythwaite; my name is Cullen."

She put out her hand, and as I held it in mine, a passionate emotion of love and pity and tenderness choked the words of reply that I forced myself to utter.

"I do not know if you remember me!"

Her complete ignorance of the real state of things gave me a shock—seemed to place a wide gulf between us. I roused myself from the momentary silence into which this thought had thrown me, and used every effort to keep up an easy and natural conversation. But the contrast between this artificial speech and the real words my heart was longing to utter made me restrained and stiff. It was a relief when Mrs. Thorne came in. Her womanly tact—the quiet grace with which she contrived to put us both at our ease, earned my warm gratitude. I mastered myself sufficiently during dinner to be able to prove that reserve and gaucherie were not habitual to me. The wish to appear to the best advantage in Miss Cullen's eyes stimulated me to exert myself to the utmost. I was so far rewarded as to see that once or twice, when I was relating some anecdote, the weary listless look left her face for a moment.

Thorne told me, when we were having a quiet cigar together, that his wife had had the greatest difficulty to persuade Lucy to return with her.

"Poor girl! She is quite knocked down by these unlucky nervous attacks. They have taken away every bit of courage from her. She declares she can never put her foot on a platform again. She wants to go away somewhere and be quite quiet. She thought of advertising for a situation as musical governess in a boarding-school. Margaret promised that we would see to that if she would stay with us a month or two and get her strength up. She is so afraid of outstaying her welcome—as if she could!—and it was only when my wife gave a solemn promise to find a situation for her directly she is strong enough, that she consented to come to us. She has no more idea than this decanter of the particular situation she is wanted to fill."

"It is just that which troubles me," I said. "I do not believe she notices or cares whether I am in the room or out of it."

"My good fellow, you expect too much. Why, she has only seen you twice! You don't think she is like a girl in a country village ready to fall in love with the first

stranger she chances to meet! She has been out in the world, remember. You must not flatter yourself that you are the only fascinating individual she has ever met. And I don't believe," continued Thorne, who was in an unusually conversational mood, "Lucy has ever thought much about marrying. You see, her ambitions have been entirely fixed upon music; but now she finds that she can never succeed as a singer she will have to look at life from a different point of view. Not yet, because she is just now suffering acutely—you can see that in her face; but when the first bitterness of the disappointment is past, then will be your opportunity. You must come here as often as you can. She will grow to look for your visits. With her affectionate clinging nature, I feel sure it will not be long before you are loved as warmly as you deserve to be."

I wished I could share in this faith, but Thorne's cheering words roused no hopeful echo in my heart. I walked homewards with the strange feeling that what had before seemed an impossible dream was gradually and surely shaping itself into living reality.

But this knowledge brought with it no elation; on the contrary, I was singularly depressed. I tried to shake off the melancholy that weighed upon me. I tried to picture scenes in the future when Lucy and I would be together, and when we would laugh over this night's plot, and she would look back to it with gratitude. I tried to fancy her leaning on my arm and telling me that my love had won its reward at last; that the girl's infatuation for a false hero had given place to the woman's deep and changeless love for a true lover.

But nothing would chase away this restless feeling of sadness and foreboding.

I could not sleep. The small events of the evening, every trivial speech, every look repeated itself with exaggerated distinctness in my mind.

At last, weary of hearing hour after hour strike, I got up and searched my trunk for a book.

My hand fell upon a copy of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*. A fellow-passenger had given it to me when we shook hands at parting. I had never yet read a line of it. I opened it carelessly, and the first words upon which my eyes rested were these: "Let men tremble to win the hand of woman, unless they win along with it the utmost passion of her heart."

## CHAPTER IV.

DURING the next fortnight I was a constant visitor at Dorset Square.

Thanks to Mrs. Thorne's dexterous management, I was thrown in Lucy's way frequently, and apparently as accidentally, as I could wish. Her strong nature prevailed over Lucy's gentle and compliant one so far that, instead of refusing every invitation and burying herself in solitude, the poor child was forced each day to receive and pay visits, to dance, to go to theatres and picture galleries.

Although I saw her so constantly, this time was one of intense suffering for me. I watched eagerly, as the days went by, for some sign that my presence was welcome to her. I went home each night despondent and mortified. I could never detect that she was in the least flattered by the attention I paid her. Her colour never changed, her eyes never brightened when I entered the room where she was.

When—acting on a hint from Thorne—I would purposely avoid her for an evening and sit and talk (Heaven knows with how heavy a heart) to some girl whose eagerness to keep me by her side half amused half sickened me—she would not betray by look or sign that she had noticed my desertion.

Sometimes I would go home so stung by this maddening indifference that I would resolve to leave her to her fate—leave her to try the harsh experiences a woman must meet with when she tries to earn her bread—leave her till she came to think of me with sorrowful regret.

But I could not. Her presence had become necessary to my existence. To be in the same room with her, to breathe the air she breathed, to watch the pale sad face that to me was the one face in the whole world—this was my happiness, and I could not give it up; my torture, and I would not shrink from it.

I remember distinctly the first time that I noticed a change in her manner. Her eyes did not meet mine with their usual frank indifferent gaze when I went in.

There was a nervous consciousness in their expression, and a faint colour tinged her cheeks. The thought struck me, "They have told her that I love her."

Never had I watched her with such keen anxiety, such piercing observation.

Was it a natural feeling of girlish modesty which made her shrink from me when I approached her—or—No. I could not bear the thought; and yet, again and



again, it came back, and refused to be put away. It could not be! Why should she regard me with aversion? And yet I knew in my inmost soul that it was so.

What had come to me? Had my character entirely changed, that I found myself deliberately dwelling with pleasure on a thought which a month ago I had thrust from me as a meanness?

But so it was. I had come to contemplate without repulsion the terrible idea that my wealth could buy for me the woman I loved! I even found myself repeating the arguments the Thornes would be likely to use. I pictured them pointing out to her the common-sense view of things; contrasting the two paths of life which lay before her.

On the one hand the existence she would lead as an underpaid, overworked musical governess, with her spirit broken by the hopeless monotony of days and weeks and months spent in the constant strain of teaching; on the other, a marriage with a man cultivated, wealthy, passionately attached to her, only longing to brighten her life with happiness and affection.

No girl in her senses could hesitate. I could fancy them saying: "What reason could she have for this indecision?"

None that they were aware of, but I knew only too well that there was a sufficient reason. I felt assured that all she had suffered at the hands of this Geoffrey Fraser had failed to destroy her affection for him. It was he that stood between us. Her love for him had been, after all, no mere girlish infatuation. Through the suffering, the sorrow, the failure he had brought on her she loved him, and, while this love remained, the thought of marriage filled her with terror and aversion.

But I fell back upon the old argument, "when once she is my wife, my love must meet with a return."

Time passed on, and I began to grow impatient to end this suspense. I watched for an opportunity to speak to her alone, but I fancy she suspected and frustrated my intention, for I could never succeed in obtaining it.

However, this playing at cross-purposes could not go on for ever. Mrs. Thorne was evidently of the same opinion; and one evening, when we had been sitting and chatting for some time, she got up and begged us to excuse her; she had a letter which must be written before post-time.

Lucy turned very white, half rose from her seat, and looked at her imploringly,

but she only gave an encouraging smile back as she left the room.

I realised that the moment was come.

For a minute or two I could not gain sufficient control over my voice to speak. But at last, in words far different to those I had meant to use, I told her how I had loved her from the first moment when I saw her standing in the porch amongst the roses; how she had filled my thoughts as I journeyed to India; how I had only valued my wealth because I could offer it to her; how, if she refused to become my wife, my life would be worthless to me.

She trembled violently as she listened. Her face was turned away from me and I could not see its expression.

Presently I drew near to her and ventured to take her hand.

Good heavens! had I suffered this heart-sickness, these hours of suspense and hope and fear for weeks, only to see her eyes grow wild with fear, her very lips turn white, only to feel her hand turn like death in mine, when I asked her if she could ever love me?

Involuntarily I recoiled. The unspeakable agony of the moment overcame me. I turned away, and for a little time the loud ticking of the clock alone broke the silence. When I could control myself enough to look at her, I saw that she was almost sinking with emotion. I wheeled her a chair, and presently the colour flowed back to her face; great tears gathered in her eyes and rolled down her cheeks. She spoke at last a few broken words of thanks and gratitude; she did not deserve so much goodness; she was not worthy of it.

"You will not ask me to answer now? I cannot, I am afraid. I do not know what I ought to do. Will you come to-morrow?"

I promised. She rose from her seat and timidly held out her hand. As I touched it, something of the deathly chill which had crept into it seemed to pass into mine.

I passed a sleepless night, tormented by the bitterest thoughts. What good had my fortune brought me? It could buy me the wife I loved so passionately, but it could not give me happiness. Was it not rather bringing to me a perpetual sorrow? Could I endure the constant agony of the knowledge that, though our lives would be inseparably united, our souls must for ever dwell apart?

The false hopes I had been indulging that my passionate affection for her must in time meet with a return vanished, and

left me face to face with the terrible presentiment, "She will never love me."

With the morning light came brighter thoughts. I persuaded myself that I had taken too highly-coloured a view of the events of last night. It was natural that she should be agitated. Any girl would be startled out of her self-possession by having so serious a decision placed in her hands. It was my insight into her past history that tinged with suspicion the most innocent speech or look. Had I been in ignorance of her affection for Geoffrey Fraser, I should have accepted in good faith Thorne's assertion that she was entirely heart-whole. I should never have translated her shyness of manner into an evidence of personal dislike to myself. I should have been more natural, less restrained. As it was, this knowledge seemed to me to hover between us like a dark shadow, oppressing us both with a malevolent influence.

The next day nervous impatience to know my fate made further delay insupportable. In the afternoon I walked round to the Thornes', and was shown into the empty drawing-room.

It seemed a long time before I heard the soft rustle of Lucy's dress. She paused a long time at the door, then the handle was hesitatingly turned and she came in very timidly and tremulously. I went forward to meet her, led her to a seat, and took one beside her.

I asked her if she had thought well over what I had said to her the night before. She said yes, she had thought very earnestly. I asked if I might hope that she would trust her happiness to me. She hesitated.

"There is something I wish to tell you before I answer," she said at last.

"You must not tell me anything that it pains you to speak or think of," I replied. "Nothing that you may have to say will affect what I said to you last night."

She was nervously playing with the fan she held in her hand. Her eyes had not once met mine, and she did not raise them when she spoke again.

"I feel you ought to know," she said at last with an evident effort; "but I cannot bear to speak of it. It was last year—I—"

Here she broke down completely.

I knew only too well what the poor child was trying to tell me; I knew the sense of degradation which made it so bitter a task for a high-spirited girl to

confess to a man who honoured and respected her above all other women, that the affection he sought, as the dearest treasure the world could give him, had already been bestowed, only to be cast aside with contemptuous readiness.

Two emotions possessed me, and prompted me to commit the fatal error of checking her confidence at once. One was a generous impulse to spare her the evident pain of confessing what she had suffered; the other was a sudden burning jealousy which made me feel that I could not hear from her lips that she had ever loved that man.

No kind angel warned me that this was one of those crises when the whole of a future may hang on the decision of a moment. I acted on the impulse that urged me not to hear a word of that past which she felt it a duty to lay before me. I rejected the confidence which might have laid a happy foundation for our married life. I firmly believe that, had I had the courage to invite it by frankly telling her of the strange circumstances which had revealed her story to me, I should have won her trust and sympathy. She would soon have learnt to look to me for protection and pity—all the future might have been different.

It was not to be. The golden moment passed, and the next words that I spoke decided my fate.

I told her that nothing that had happened in the past could affect the present. I begged her never again to refer to it. The past should be closed for both of us. I told her again how she held my life in her hands, and how, if she would be my wife, I would only live to make her future a happy one.

She listened with the tears stealing down her face.

This time I kissed them away, and though she trembled from head to foot, she did not shrink from me.

I hardly dared to believe in my own happiness, and yet this was but the shadow of it. Would the reality ever exist? It was so different from what I had craved for, this passive unresponsive yielding, with none of the sacred tenderness and warmth of love in it. It was the submission of gratitude, of necessity, not the pure response of affection.

I grew absent and melancholy. It was an absolute relief to me, as I know it was to Lucy, when Mrs. Thorne, coming in, asked if she might offer her good wishes.

It was a relief when the evening was over, and I turned my face homeward.

I had won the prize I had striven and waited and prayed for. Why should this jarred unhappy feeling still haunt me like a coming sorrow? Why should that sentence cross my mind with such wearing persistence?

"Let men tremble to win the hand of woman unless they win along with it the utmost passion of her heart!"

Days and weeks passed by with the same passionate jealous affection on my part, the same gentle, grateful attempt at responsiveness on hers. I could detect the effort she made when we were alone to appear at ease with me, to be natural and affectionate. I knew that all the time a sense of uneasiness was oppressing her and making my absence a relief.

There was no reason for delaying our marriage. Neither of us had any relations whom it would be necessary to consult. It was an understood thing that our wedding would be as quiet as possible, that Thorne would give me my bride, and that he and his wife would be the only witnesses of the ceremony. It was also tacitly understood that we were to be married towards the end of June.

I had expected that Lucy herself would be anxious for a respite; indeed the first time I ventured to ask her to fix the day, the expression of her face showed only too plainly with what feelings she regarded my request.

I made an excuse to run down to Mayfield, which was being put in order for us. I remained there some days. A restlessness possessed me. I rode hard; I wandered over the heath; I tried to battle out the conflicting passions that tortured me. One moment I resolved to resign her—the next to claim her in spite of all.

At the end of a week I had determined that nothing now should divide us; that even should the feeling of fear and dislike I felt I had inspired in her grow to absolute repugnance or hatred, she should still be mine.

My mind, as I journeyed towards London, was filled with agitating anticipations of our next meeting; but so exhausted was I by nights of sleeplessness and days of bodily fatigue, that I dozed off at last. Only one other passenger shared the carriage with me—a delicate-looking man enveloped in wraps.

I woke up with a start as the door was

thrown violently open at Croydon, and a tall young man hurriedly entered. The light was full on his face, and as he passed, my companion, who had also started up, uttered an exclamation that set every pulse in my body throbbing.

Were my senses leaving me, was this a nightmare, or did I hear him say, "Why, it is Geoffrey Fraser!" and the other answer, "Yes, it is I."

I was in my right mind; I was awake; it was reality. I saw the two men shake hands, and with my heart beating in suffocating throbs I waited for the next words.

"Why, where in the world did you spring from?" my fellow-traveller exclaimed. "I thought you were in India. How long have you been back?"

"Just three days," the other replied.

"But you had no intention of leaving Calcutta when I saw you last."

"No; but I was compelled to do so, unfortunately. You have not heard, I see, of my—misfortune. My wife died two days after you left."

"Bless me! you don't say so! How very shocking! What was it? Heart disease?"

"No, apoplexy. It was a great shock, of course; so entirely unexpected."

"Yes, indeed. I can sympathise with you most sincerely—my own recent loss makes me sensitive to that of another."

Fraser bowed his head as if to dismiss the subject. He had taken off his hat, and I saw a handsome man about twenty-eight years of age, with thick fair hair and moustache, finely-chiselled features, and indolent dark-grey eyes.

"And do you intend remaining altogether in England now?"

"I do not know; I have not decided. It depends upon circumstances."

"I suppose it was urgent business then that brought you back here so suddenly?" pursued his questioner, who seemed strongly interested.

"Well, yes. I felt it to be so."

"Anything connected with money affairs? Excuse my asking."

"Not in the slightest."

Then seeing his friend still looking enquiringly at him, he added hurriedly and impetuously:

"It is a purely personal matter. I cannot explain. I am anxious to find out a friend I have lost sight of for some time. I have been unsuccessful to-day, but I have no doubt to-morrow will bring me better fortune."



The other, who seemed to have a whole string of further enquiries on his lips, was compelled to reserve them for a future occasion. He had reached his destination, and there was no time for more than a hurried hand-shake, and an invitation to dine at the club.

Fraser and I were left together.

Perhaps he had been conscious that the interest I had shown in the conversation was too marked to be civil, for throwing himself back in his seat he honoured me with an insolent stare, then closed his eyes, and did not open them till we reached London Bridge.

He drove away in a hansom; I walked on automatically. Some instinct like that which guides the feet of a drunken man took me safely to the hotel where I stayed, and led me up to the familiar room.

Once there, I tried to shape the wild hurried thoughts that had been darting through my mind, "He is back again! he is free! he is rich. He has come in search of her; in a few days, perhaps to-morrow, they may meet, and then she will forgive him all; she will revive at the first sound of his voice; the old spell will be upon her, she will not be able to resist it; she will beg me to release her; their lives will pass together; she will have a happiness that will atone for all. And he will be happy; he who forsook her, who left her without one word, to droop and fade; he will have the reward—while I—I who love her so; I must look on and see him take my treasure. He shall not! he shall not! What right has he to come between us now? She is mine. I claim her by the love that thrilled me with the first notes of her voice, even before I had seen her. I claim her by the love that has never ceased to burn within me from the first moment that we met. I claim her by all the suffering I have borne for her. Her secret sorrows have been mine. My life is bound up in hers, and hers shall be bound to mine. No other man shall call her his wife while I live. And yet, she, poor child! Is this love that would rob her of happiness? Is it not rather selfish passion? Would not real love be strong enough for any sacrifice to bring back the smile to her eyes? I have only to speak a few words to-morrow; I have only to tell her what I know of her past story, only to add what I heard in the train to-night. Only that. Ah, but I must say, too, "You are free!" No; I cannot do it, come what may. I cannot resign her. I will never release her from her promise to me. I will

bear any punishment that fate may have in store for me; but at least it shall not rob me of her now. She must never meet him again. She must learn to love me in time."

I hurried round to Dorset Square early next morning.

I found her alone. She looked surprised at my haggard appearance; perhaps she was touched by it. She met me with an attempt at gladness; she affected interest in what I had been doing; she expressed concern at my altered looks.

I took advantage of this gracious mood; I told her that I felt I needed change. Would she care to go to Italy instead of to Mayfield, where we had thought of staying first?

Her eyes brightened at the idea. She would be glad to leave England she said; she longed to visit Italy. I pressed my advantage, and before I left, it was arranged that our marriage should take place in three weeks.

I passed the intervening time in an agonising state of mind. I was sick with apprehension that he would discover her; that he would in some way explain his conduct, that he would claim her even now. Every ring at the bell made me start; the postman's knock was a torture to me; I scanned each face in the street as I walked along; I scarcely left her side. The days crawled by; each one that passed without realising my dread bringing a relief, only tempered by the thought that on the morrow calamity might be awaiting me.

But at last the morning so anxiously longed for dawned, and in the gloomy stillness of the London church the irrevocable words were spoken which gave her to me.

Was I happy? Could I call this exultant, excited emotion, happiness?

I tried to hush the inner voice that told me I had acted dishonourably, that I had cheated her of happiness to gain it myself.

I tried not to read in the marble pallor of her face, and the piteous wistful appeal of her eyes, the truth I knew only too well.

At least she was mine; nothing could part us now. And as we drove away, and I clasped her in my arms, and begged her to love me a little, she tremblingly lifted her pale face to mine in the first caress she had ever offered, and I hoped that all might yet be well.

## LADY DEANE.

BY MRS. LEITH ADAMS.

## CHAPTER IV. THE DAWN OF DAY.

MANY were the strange rumours about the doings at the Glen in these days. How do those things get about of which none but two or three in a household are cognisant, and those two or three all interested in keeping them from the world? Sometimes it would seem as though the very walls had ears, and the birds of the air a voice to spread things abroad.

It was known and discussed in all its possible and impossible bearings that Lady Deane had fallen into a deep swoon while talking with Sir Edgar in her own special apartment; that he had been well-nigh distraught with love and fear—that the family physician had prescribed for her entire and perfect rest of mind and body. So far, it was comprehensible that things had become known in the neighbourhood. But who first started the supposition that Deane Glen was haunted? Who added thereunto the perfectly gratuitous falsehood that Michael Daly, the old family servant, walked in his sleep, and frightened the other inmates of the house “out of their proper wits?”

As time went on, rumour added to all this fears about Sir Edgar’s health; not so much his physical condition, but a moody and abstracted state of mind—shown by solitary rambles extended far on into the night—and by this or that other eccentric habit.

Speaking of Lady Deane, people said, “Poor soul! has she not had trouble enough?” Then they put their heads close together, and lowered their voices as they added, “Is the doom of his house coming upon that handsome son of hers? Is there going to be another ‘mad Deane?’”

She did not know that people talked of her and hers in this way. Life, I think, would lose all its brightness for most of us, if we knew how others speak of us and our affairs. Happily we don’t; and no wise man or woman will ever seek to tear aside that veil of ignorance which is in truth a shelter from the storm, and “a covert from the tempest.”

She lived her life utterly alone; more so, in truth, even than heretofore. She would sit at the window, book in hand, every now and then raising her eyes to the fair demesne round the stately home that

had been to her so lacking in all peace and joy, that might have been so different had she willed it. Sometimes she saw two figures—Sir Edgar and his dog crossing the landscape that lay outspread before her eyes, the master walking rapidly along, taking no heed of anything to right or left of him, the dog following at his heel. Except at meal times she saw little of this strange pair. The groom said that Sir Edgar’s horse was “eating its head off” in the stable.

“Why do you never ride now?” said Lady Deane, speaking to her son with a timidity that was new and strange to see in one hitherto so self-reliant.

“Walking tires me out best,” he answered, and left her.

In her distress and perplexity, in the horrible haunting fears that possessed her, she turned to that humble but faithful friend, Michael Daly.

“What shall we do?” she cried, wringing her hands, all her pride broken down, all her haughty reserve laid aside in the keen suffering of the moment.

“’Deed, and I’m hard put to it to know myself,” said poor old Daly, who was ready to wring his hands too, and in some sort blamed himself for the state of affairs. “I’ve a notion Master ‘Gar’s never been rightly himself since that night when, like the dodderin’ old fool I am, I got dreaming and shouting in my sleep, and being as my room’s just overhead to his, he heard me, and came up to see what mad diversions I was carrying on with. I’d been dreaming about—about—” but here Daly realised that his zeal had outrun his discretion, and that he was getting into embarrassing topics.

“I know,” she said quickly, “he told me.” Daly breathed more freely.

“I’m thinking,” he said, “as the grouse and suchlike creatures whose season is nigh at hand, might divert his mind, and set him thinking of asking a few young gentlemen like himself to waken up the old house with their lively talk and their nonsense. It would be more natural-like, my lady, to see him with the like of them about him, than going about for ever with no company but his own; walking such stretches of miles at times, that he just throws himself on his bed when he comes in, and sleeps there in his clothes, and them as damp as if he’d been laying on the grass with the dew thick on it.”

She put her hand up to her forehead, and Daly thought he heard her moan.

The old man knew nothing of that dread "vision of the night" in the gun-room. That secret must for ever rest between those two, mother and son; to her the image of an excited and disordered brain, to him a fearful experience that had changed the very colour and current of his life.

The autumn wore away, the dreary winter passed; and then, with the first spring flowers came a dawn of light upon the dull grey world of Lady Deane's life.

Sir Edgar's closest friend, Arthur Ffoliott, came home from long wanderings in the East, undertaken for the sake of health. He came to stay at the Glen, and Daly's heart was rejoiced by seeing things look "more natural-like," and by hearing the sound of cheerful voices and merry laughter, where all had been so silent.

For Arthur Ffoliott was the very cheeriest of mortals, in spite of health so fragile that people were wont to speak of him as a man with "one foot in the grave." Be that as it might, he made good use of the one left to him for the active purposes of life, and even in times of much physical exhaustion never a word of repining crossed his lips.

Lady Deane felt the influence of his bright smile, and the blue eyes so like a boy's in their ready gleam of fun.

Edgar's rambles were no longer solitary, and their length had to be proportioned to the strength, or rather the weakness, of his companion. Late hours, extending far on towards morning, were also abandoned. The young master of Glen Deane began to look, as Daly said, chuckling in the exuberance of his content, "more like himself"—adding, in a muttering voice, meant for no one's ears but his own—"and less like the master."

From dawn to day is but a natural step. Soon, though it came in a form the mother would hardly have perhaps chosen had she had her own way, the last traces of morbid restlessness and moody melancholy disappeared from the young heart they had so perilously overshadowed. The sunshine of a girl's smile, the light in guileless eyes, were the sweet influences that drove them quite away. Edgar Deane's life became an idyll of which the sweet refrain was—"Christabel, fair Christabel!"

They had been playmates in the days of long ago; and through the passing years had met betimes, each time forging a new link of the chain that was winding about the heart of the boy-lover.

Edgar used to think his little love was

like a flower, that every time he saw it had grown into some new beauty. He noted each change in her outward appearance; first, the waving mane of rippling locks put simply back from her sunny face by a long comb—then these locks imprisoned, as became her riper years, into long plaits, that made sweet Christie Clare look like Gretchen before she went to the fatal village festival.

It was not only that Christabel was fairer than all other women in Edgar Deane's eyes, but she was, by one of those eager impulses that ruled his life, destined by him to become the ideal wife and companion that he craved. Of her suitability for the rôle, I fear he was but little qualified to judge. Calm judgment was not his forte at any time, still less so under the glamour of a passion as true as it was headstrong. Nay, his love for Christabel was even more than this; it was one of those precious "schemes" which he was always evolving out of the life within him, and the life around him—the longing and determination to mould the girl into the woman; to have no other influence than his own hold any sway in a kingdom to be organised wholly by himself.

With all his tenderness towards Lady Deane, these dreams and hopes had never been shared with her; which went to prove how little real sympathy of thought and feeling there was between his character and hers; a want that the boy had often felt in years past, and that now the man had learnt to live without.

It was from the lips of Arthur Ffoliott that Edgar's mother first learnt the story of this life-long love. He, wholly suppressing any sign of surprise at her entire ignorance of the matter, spoke gently and tenderly of his friend's career when abroad—of the zeal with which he worked; of the high standard up to which he lived—a standard so different to that of many of those around him. And then he touched upon the sweet and holy influence that had been at work—"the maiden passion for a maid"—that had kept the waters of life crystal-clear.

Love, however deep and true, cannot change the nature in which it exists, though it may chasten that nature; and Lady Deane, as she paced slowly up and down the terrace-walk, that was one of the great beauties of the Glen, with Arthur Ffoliott by her side, fought a hard fight with the jealousy and love of sway which had wrecked her past life, before she could



speak, as she wished to speak, of Edgar and his love for Christabel—the child she remembered as his playmate in the past, the pretty maiden she had met at Lady Graham's only a week ago.

"Edgar is always full of great ideas of what he is to do one day," she said at last, when a choking sensation in her throat, which had made speaking difficult, was overcome; "and you, who are his well-beloved friend, his second self, must know as well as I do, that these great things he longs to do are not always wise things; they are dreams of Utopia—castles in the air—not palaces that can be lived in——"

"I know all that, and more. But, dear Lady Deane, believe me this is a wise thing upon which 'Gar's heart is now set. If he can win this girl's love it will be an abiding rest to him——"

"If?" she said, with a regal motion of her classic head. "There is little of that in the question I should say. The girl is poor, a sort of protégée of your friend, Lady Graham. She is destined, if I am not mistaken, to become an English teacher in the foreign school where she has been herself educated by your friend, Lady Graham. My son is wealthy and titled."

Arthur Ffoliott gave a quick glance at the clear profile of the woman by his side. Yes; he knew now, to a hair's-breadth, wherein lay the want of sympathy between this mother and her son; the man who was dear to him as his own life.

"You have not seen much of Christabel Clare, or you would scarcely judge her so hardly," he said quietly, yet with a tone that carried weight.

A faint colour rose to Lady Deane's cheek. Perhaps from no one else save from Arthur Ffoliott would she have deigned to take an implied reproof.

"I do not mean to judge her hardly," she said; "still, she does not look to me like a fool."

"No, she is not that, or I should scarcely think her worthy of being Edgar's wife. She is quite unformed and undisciplined in mind and character; but, as he said to me last night, 'she has the makings of a grand woman about her.' There can be no greater proof of this, I think, than the fact that you spoke of just now, her determination to make an independence for herself. It is entirely her own doing. Perhaps you already know that she is the child of one of Lady Graham's oldest friends, that she is, in every sense, by birth and by connection, a gentlewoman; but that her father, one of

the most unfortunate of men, died in great poverty, and her mother did not long survive him. Some paltry income—if one can call it by such a name—is all that Christabel possesses in the world; and yet, so highly do Sir Dennis and Lady Graham estimate her, that no daughter of their own could be dearer."

After this came a long silence, broken at last by Arthur himself.

"Will you pardon me, Lady Deane, if I seem to take too much upon myself in what I am going to say? Will you let the remembrance of my friendship for one we both love, plead for me, if such a thought arises in your mind, and arrays itself against me?"

She bent her head, but spoke no word.

"When I came home the other day and ran down here in answer to 'Gar's urgent letter, I was shocked—more shocked than I can say—to see the change that but a few months had brought about——"

"In—my son?" she said; her hand up to her throat as if something stifled her.

"In your son, my dearest friend."

There were rare moments in this woman's life when the hard nature softened for a moment. This was one of them.

Something in the intonation of the words, "my dearest friend," went home to that hidden spot of tenderness that lurked somewhere in her heart. As she turned her sad dark eyes upon the face of the man beside her, that gentle happy face which yet so plainly bore the signs of coming death, the great tears rose and dimmed her sight.

"I am not like another might be," he went on, the sweet smile that was so peculiar to him hovering faintly round the lips that spoke their own doom; "not like anyone who can look forward to seeing the happy future of those they love. With me, it is here to-day, and, may be, gone to-morrow; so that I cannot very well put off saying a thing that feels as if it ought to be said."

"I know," she said; "'Gar has told me."

"I am glad of that. It may make you find it easier to forgive me for anything I say that seems like presumption upon my part."

"Nothing could seem so to me," she said, laying her hand a moment on his arm.

"Well, I will open my mind to you then. While Edgar and I were abroad together I have seen him much the same as I found him when I came to you a month ago—moody, abstracted, restless—full of strange and fitful fancies. 'I am like Saul, to-day,' he used to say to

me; 'come and be my David.' You know, most people do, I think, it being a prominent accomplishment, in consequence of being my only one, that I can read aloud with some comfort to the listeners. Well, I used to read to 'Gar in those restless moods of his, and then, when I had read him into a state of quiet, we would go wandering up the mountain sides—no," he added, with a short gay laugh, "along the mountain sides I mean, this clumsy heart of mine would soon rebel against my going up anything except zigzag like a tired horse, up a hill. Well, the mood would pass, and I generally found that it had been brought on by too close an application to one groove of study. Now, I don't know what one subject dear old 'Gar has been brooding upon for some time back, for he has said but little to me of what he has been about; but he has been driving that excitable brain of his all one way—what way you can very likely judge better than I can."

He could not see her face, for she had turned away from him, and was apparently watching a peacock on the terrace lower than the one on which they two were pacing, strutting about in the sunshine, trailing its gorgeous train proudly along the grass, arching its shining neck like a conscious beauty. He could not see her face; but he could see the heaving of her breast—he could note the trembling of the hand that held the shawl across it.

There was another long silence, during which the peacock uttered a harsh, discordant scream, and floated, a thing of marvellous beauty, across their pathway and into the woods beyond.

Then Arthur Ffoliott spoke again:

"Lady Deane, we want someone to play David to our Saul, and that someone must be, not I, but Christabel. No one realises more keenly than I do that there is much in this attachment that you might wish otherwise; but I know Edgar so well—I love him so truly—I venture to express a hope that his mother will not oppose what I am so thoroughly convinced is for his best happiness—nay, more—what I believe will be the——"

She broke in here with a vehement passion that startled and silenced him.

"You need plead no more, Mr. Ffoliott. I shall never raise a hand to oppose my son's will about this girl. I have seen and mourned over what you have seen and

mourned over. I felt, when you came, as if a light had shone in upon my darkness; as if I had some hope that 'Gar might shake off that fatal depression that it has gone near to break my heart to see. I knew you could not mean him anything but good. I know you could not be otherwise than wise for him. If he can win this girl's love—a love that is to make him so happy, as you say—never fear that I will stand between them."

She spoke with a haughty composure, but all the while the demon of jealousy was gnawing at her heart. She had fought and conquered, outwardly—within the storm raged fiercely.

As she moved away towards the house, leaving Arthur Ffoliott standing bare-headed beneath the trees, watching her pass out of sight, she kept saying over and over to herself, thinking of her son:

"I have given him up. I have given him up—the only thing I had!"

Having put her hand to the plough, she never looked back. She made no comment upon Edgar's frequent absences at Lady Graham's, though the many miles' drive or ride there and back made her whole day lonely. When Arthur Ffoliott left the Glen she made no allusion to the subject that had been discussed upon the terrace and never named since; but, hardly were the buds of the May-blossom peeping out from the hedges by the wayside, when he heard that Miss Clare was the guest of Lady Deane. And we, who have followed this history so far, know that when those buds were blossoms, down by the brook that rippled at their feet, and bore upon its gently stirring breast the white and yellow stars of the water-weeds, Edgar Deane and Christabel wandered hand-in-hand—plighted lovers.

Arthur Ffoliott was wise beyond those years that were so few, and never likely to be many. He had proved himself a loyal friend and a powerful pleader. Still, it takes a very wise man indeed to read a young girl's heart, and he had no idea that Christabel, though she had promised to marry Sir Edgar Deane "one of these fine days," knew no more of the glamour of love, with its mingled passion and tenderness, its self-forgetfulness and devotion, than the blue egg of the thrush, as it lies warmly cradled in the cosy nest, knows of the glory of song, and all the dear delights of the summer yet to come.

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